

Today's News - Thursday, March 6, 2014

- It seems BBC is having its own Denise Scott Brown moment when Patty Hopkins is Photoshopped out of pix of "The Brits Who Built the Modern World" - leaving only the good ol' boys (and "consistent with how women's contributions have been airbrushed out of history").
- Arch Record offers a masterful round-up of "super-sized design" with gigantic projects that "confront the gargantuan challenges - and solve them in ingenious ways."
- Speaking of gargantuan, does Queensland's Cairns really want/need a \$4.2 billion mega-resort and casino: though some "refer to it as 'intrusive,' 'unnecessary' and 'excessive,'" the developer is hoping to wow everyone "with superiority through magnitude."
- Vertical cities "could be a solution to the challenge of high-density urbanization."
- Urban sprawl, on the other hand, is called a Ponzi scheme that "brings about countless costs, both to cities and to the people who live there."
- Though not a lot of details (like who's designing what), it's still good news for Detroit: a handful of big developments about to get underway.
- Meanwhile, Flint, Michigan's mayor declares a \$70 million "war on blight," with plans to tear down nearly 6,000 buildings - and "get volunteers to take care of 20,000 vacant lots."
- Heathcote is more than a bit disheartened by the "lack of vision for Crossrail station designs," seeing it as "a rare opportunity being wasted" with designs by good architects that are nonetheless "banal" and "inoffensive but dull."
- Ulam reports on plans "to improve the notorious brick desert" that is the Brutalist Boston City Hall Plaza (alas, there isn't the budget to do the whole thing, but it's a good start).
- A Swedish artist wins the competition to design three memorials to the victims of the July 22, 2011 Norwegian massacres ("Memory Wound" is stunning!).
- Avanti Architects beats out some heavy hitters to win the job of revamping Stirling's Florey building in Oxford (commenters are none too pleased, calling the plan "vandalism" and a "bastardization").
- BDP/Levitt Bernstein team wins the Royal Docks competition.
- Four are in the running to transform 17 acres in the heart of Birmingham city center.
- A conversation with McDonough re: Cradle to Cradle: "When he thinks, he thinks big."
- Mock cheers "12 Years a Slave" for showing "not only how slavery exploited and devastated African Americans, but also how it did the same to the American environment."
- Autodesk launches a foundation to "support the most impactful nonprofit organizations using the power of design to help solve epic challenges."
- Eyefuls of the MIPIM 2014 Architectural Review Future Project Award winners (with any luck some will - and hopefully some won't - be built).
- NBM names Laura Bush and the National Trust for Historic Preservation as 2014 Honor Award recipients.

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BBC slammed for 'bias' after Patty Hopkins is sidelined in TV show: Architects accuse "The Brits Who Built the Modern World" TV series of 'distorting history' by excluding leading female figures...criticised for painting a 'biased and misogynistic view of architecture'...Hopkins had been 'photoshopped' out of the key shot by the photographer. - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Super-size Design: Big has a bad rap. Big buildings...are often soulless, monotonous, or intimidating. Beyond a certain size, is real architecture possible? By Cathleen McGuigan, Hugh Pearman, Joann Gonchar, Clifford A. Pearson, etc. -- Rem Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture/OMA; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Studio Fuksas; Ole Scheeren; MAD Architects; Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture; BIG/Bjarke Ingels Group; Gensler; Herzog & de Meuron/Hassell; Rafael Viñoly; Foster + Partners [images]- Architectural Record

\$4.2bn mega-resort and casino proposed near Cairns: Aquis Great Barrier Reef Resort will include nine luxury hotels, an 18-hole golf course, a 25,000-seat stadium...lack of 'architectural harmony' is of concern..."Although labelled 'innovative', 'modern' and even 'breathtaking' by some, many now...refer to it as 'intrusive', 'unnecessary' and 'excessive'"...Aquis is hoping to wow the community and tourists with superiority through magnitude.- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Rethinking Urbanism Through Vertical Cities: With the world's urban population growing at an unprecedented rate, high-rise buildings will feature prominently in future cities. The concept of the vertical city could be a solution to the challenge of high-density urbanisation. -- MVRDV; PinkCloud [images]- Sourceable

Is Sprawl Development Simply Unaffordable? Urban sprawl brings about countless costs, both to cities and to the people who live there...sprawl development doesn't cover its costs, leaving municipalities to make up the difference...a "Ponzi Scheme" ... -- Chuck Marohn/Strong Towns - Sourceable

Real estate in Detroit: Nearly \$900 million planned in construction of 5 developments: ...two are redevelopments and three are entirely new construction. Those five projects total 3.9 million square feet...- Crain's Detroit Business

Flint Mayor Dayne Walling declares \$70 million 'war on blight': ...to tear down nearly 6,000 buildings...aims to get volunteers to take care of 20,000 vacant lots in the next year, which would double the number taken care of last year.- MLive.com (Michigan)

Concern over lack of vision for Crossrail station designs: ...a rare opportunity to create a string of public buildings that could help define the 21st-century civic realm...being wasted...The problem is not a lack of good architects...The problem is...a lack of architectural coherence...banal...fall notably flat...inoffensive but dull. By Edwin Heathcote -- Foster + Partners; Wilkinson Eyre; Grimshaw and Partners; John McAslan; Hawkins Brown; Fereday Pollard- Financial Times (UK)

Softening Boston's City Hall: Landscape interventions to improve the notorious brick desert: "There is a history there and we respect that, but we wanted...to make it inhabitable"... will be breaking ground in March...There isn't the budget to do all of City Hall Plaza... By Alex Ulam -- I.M. Pei and Partners (1960s); Utile Architecture + Planning; Reed Hilderbrand; HDR; Halvorson Design Partnership [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Wounded landscape: how Norway is remembering its 2011 Utøya massacre: Artist Jonas Dahlberg has been chosen to create three memorials, one of which cuts a 3.5m slit in the landscape, to remember the victims of Anders Behring Breivik- Guardian (UK)

Avanti Architects scoops Florey revamp: beats strong shortlist to work on James Stirling's Oxford building..involves updating the 40-year-old grade II building at the Queen's College which is widely regarded as an emblem of modernism. -- John McAslan; Feilden Clegg Bradley; Hawkins Brown; Nicholas Hare; Levitt Bernstein [image]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Proposal for Silvertown Docks wins Royal Docks competition: "This has a sense of place and a notion of history." -- BDP/Building Design Partnership/Levitt Bernstein; Arup; Studio Engleback; Baharash Architects; Christos Diplas/James Hartwell [images]- Landscape Institute (UK) / Ecobuild

Four landscape architects shortlisted for Paradise Circus work: Proposals from Gillespies, Grant Associates, Gustafson

Porter and GROSS.MAX to transform 17 acres in the heart of Birmingham city centre were selected.- Birmingham Post (UK)

Cradle to Cradle: An interview with William McDonough: ...a leading light in creating not just architecture, but entire systems of non-toxic, no-waste production...When he thinks, he thinks big. [images]- New Zealand Herald

Henry David Thoreau would have given "12 Years a Slave" the Oscar for best picture, too: ...a lens for examining the intersection between environmentalism and social justice...Steve McQueen was trying to show not only how slavery exploited and devastated African Americans, but also how it did the same to the American environment. By Brentin Mock-Grist Magazine

Autodesk Launches Foundation Aimed to Solve "Epic Design Challenges": ... Autodesk Foundation...will "invest in and support the most impactful nonprofit organizations using the power of design...has already supported a number of projects... - MASS Design Group; KickStart International; Rural Studio at Auburn University [images, links] - ArchDaily

MIPIM Architectural Review Future Project Award winners 2014 -- Osamu Morishita; Paul Lukez Architecture/CRHA Landscape Architects/Green Design Union; Mossessian and Partners/Yassir Khalil Studio; Jan Closterman; Eller + Eller Architekten; Luca Peralta Studio; Baca Architects; Sanjay Puri; Murat Arif Suyabatmaz/Hakan Demirel; Dugan Morris Architects; Herzog & de Meuron; SANE architecture; Madhusudhan Chalasani; Design Engine/Unit One; Principal Designer; Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM); Adam Khan Architects; Marcio Kogan; BIG/Bjarke Ingels Group [slide show]- Telegraph (UK)

National Building Museum names Laura Bush and the National Trust for Historic Preservation as 2014 Honor Award recipients; Gala celebration April 1- National Building Museum



-- Shao Weiping: Phoenix International Media Center, Beijing, China. By Kevin Holden Platt

-- Sergei Tchoban & Sergei Kuznetsov: Museum for Architectural Drawing, Berlin, Germany. By Ulf Meyer

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